Telework, ICT-based mobile work in Europe: Trends, Challenges and the Right to Disconnect

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Telework and ICT-based mobile work in Europe before Covid-19

Wide differences across Member States: Italy 8% - Denmark 38%

Source: European Working Conditions Survey 2015
What are regular and occasional teleworkers?

- Occasional Telework: 13.5%
- Regular home based telework: 4.4%
- Highly mobile ICT-based mobile work: 7.3%
- Self-employed in Telework and ICT-based mobile work: 4.8%
- Other: 69.9%

Source: European Working Conditions Survey 2015
Percentage of employees teleworking before the pandemic

2019 selected countries LFS
Working from home usually or occasionally
Percentage of employees teleworking during the pandemic

July 2020 selected countries, Eurofound online survey
Working from home usually or occasionally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>LFS 2019</th>
<th>Eurofound online survey 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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Factors linked to prevalence of telework and ICT-based mobile work

- Digital development (DESI composite Index)
- Work culture (management styles, organisation of work, autonomy, responsibility, career issues)
- Structure of the economy
- Flexible work organisation regulation
Telework is here to stay – But how will it evolve?

48% report teleworking during COVID-19

14% estimated to telework pre-pandemic

Covid-19 Pandemic aftermath

Telework prevalence? Estimates could see 1/5 of European employees continue teleworking post-pandemic

Pre-pandemic

During Covid-19 Pandemic

No virus scenario
Work environment in telework and ICT-based mobile work

- Autonomy and flexibility
- ICT related connectivity (and availability)
- Blurring of time and “places”
- Culture and practices at work
- Workload leading to intensification of work, supplemental work, etc.

Source: Telework and ICT-based mobile work: Flexible working in the digital age (Eurofound, 2020)
Effects on working time

Percentage of workers working daily or several times per week in their free time (EU27 and UK)

Source: Eurofound (EWCS2015)

- Always at employers' premise w/o ICT, employee
- Always at employers' premise with ICT, employee
- Home-based teleworker, employee
- High mobile TICTM, employee
- Occasional TICTM, employee

More than 48 hours a week
Reduced rest periods (below 11 hours btw working days)

Source: Telework and ICT-based mobile work: Flexible working in the digital age (Eurofound, 2020)
Working in free time during the Covid-19

Policies to address the challenges of working remotely with digital tools:

- Telework legislation

- The Right to Disconnect
Highest level of regulation linking remote work and work–life balance, by Member State

Source: Regulations to address work-life balance in ICT-based flexible arrangements (Eurofound, 2020)
Right to Disconnect and legislation in the EU 27

Source: The Right to Disconnect in the 27 Member States (Eurofound, 2020)
Covid-19 Pandemic: Teleworking regulation and R2D

- Modification of legislation to facilitate home working in at least half of the countries in the EU

- In some countries new minimum standards for teleworking with the aim to protect workers for future expansion of telework

- General renewed interest on the R2D leading to debates and/or recommendations and guidelines related to “disconnection” or highlighting existent R2D

Source: The Right to Disconnect in the 27 Member States (Eurofound, 2020)
Conclusions

- Countries differ in terms of prevalence and the extent and form of regulating telework.

- Post-pandemic, it is very likely that at least 1/5 of European employees will telework regularly or/and occasionally (under a hybrid model).

- Working conditions and challenges are not the same in telework with consequences for work-life balance and workers’ health.

- Setting specific protection for employees in telework arrangements will be critical.

- The Right to disconnect may help improve working conditions, however, a comprehensive set of provisions addressing the challenges will be more successful.


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